

Applicant: Daniel W. King
Serial No.: 10/689,137
Group Art Unit: 1722

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the following claims having the same number as indicated:

1-8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for continuously producing a succession of separate elongated siding panels ~~each having a series of longitudinally spaced and integrally connected separate shingle panels with a hook shaped lower portion and an upper portion defining a mounting flange and a groove for receiving the lower portion of a vertically overlapping panel~~, said apparatus comprising an endless conveyor supporting a continuous series of rigid mold plates defining shingle cavities and undercut cavities, a die for extruding an extrudate, ~~a continuous sheet of heated plastics material with a generally uniform thickness and with longitudinal upper and lower portions integrally connected by a longitudinal intermediate portion~~, a guide directing the extrudate ~~the sheet~~ of heated material onto said mold plates ~~as the mold plates form a moving upper run of said conveyor~~, said mold plates having vacuum passages ~~for progressively vacuum forming the sheet into the shingle cavities and the undercut cavities of the mold plates by creating a vacuum within the cavities while the mold plates are moving on said upper run of said endless conveyor~~, and a reciprocating and traveling forming plug positioned for successively inserting into said undercut cavities ~~as the sheet is moving and being vacuum formed into said undercut cavities for progressively forming a series of integrally connected siding panels~~.

10. (Currently Amended) Apparatus as defined in claim 9 wherein each of said mold plates has upper and lower undercut cavities ~~into which the upper and lower~~

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~~portions of the sheet are progressively vacuum formed as the mold plates are moving on said upper run of said conveyor, and wherein said~~ reciprocating and traveling forming plugs are positioned for inserting the extrudate ~~the upper and lower portions of the sheet~~ into said cavities ~~as the sheet is moving with said mold plates on said upper run of said conveyor.~~

11. (Currently Amended) Apparatus as defined in claim 9 wherein each of said mold plates is formed of aluminum ~~for conducting heat quickly from the sheet of heated plastics material.~~

12. (Currently Amended) Apparatus as defined in claim 9 and including a corresponding conveyor slat attached to each of said mold plates on said endless conveyor, and elongated parallel spaced guide tracks receiving said conveyor slates.[[.]]

13. (Cancelled).

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14. (New) Apparatus for continuously producing elongated siding panels, said apparatus comprising:

an endless conveyor;

a die for extruding a continuous sheet of heated plastics material such that the continuous sheet has a generally uniform thickness and has longitudinal upper and lower portions integrally connected by a longitudinal intermediate portion;

a continuous series of rigid mold plates supported by said endless conveyor and defining shingle cavities and undercut cavities and having vacuum passages, whereby a vacuum is created within the cavities while the mold plates are moving on said upper run of said endless conveyor for progressively vacuum-forming the sheet into the shingle cavities and the undercut cavities of the mold plates;

a guide directing the sheet of heated material onto said mold plates; and

a reciprocating and traveling forming plug positioned for successively inserting into said undercut cavities, whereby a series of integrally connected siding panels are formed as the sheet is moving and being vacuum formed into said undercut cavities.